Toronto

Townhouse fire claims Ontario toddler

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A fire at a townhouse complex in Peterborough, Ont., killed a three-year-old girl and sent an 18-month-old boy to a Toronto hospital early Sunday, according to a local report.

The fire began shortly before 1 a.m. ET in an end unit of a 16-unit townhouse complex in the city's north end, the Peterborough Examiner reported. It spread to four other units before being contained by firefighters, the paper said.

The two children, who were found on the second floor of one unit, were taken to Peterborough Regional Health Centre where the girl was declared dead, the paper said.

The boy, the son of a friend of the girl's mother, was airlifted to Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children.

Neighbours said the young victims were among several children being babysat by a teenage boy while the single mother was working overnight at a local fast food restaurant, the paper reported.

One neighbour told the paper he called 911 after seeing the flames and then ran over to find the babysitter outside with three of the children.

The Ontario Fire Marshal's Office is investigating.

Acting fire Chief Trent Gervais said initial reports that a generator and fuel canister located below the townhouses were being considered as possible causes are false, the paper said.

It's not known whether the smoke detectors in the home were working.

With files from the Canadian Press

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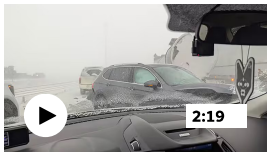

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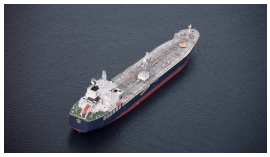

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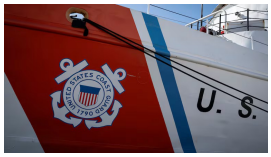

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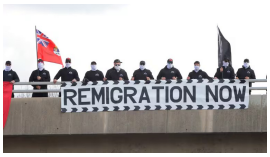

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